

# Fact Sheet

## Willapa River Estuary Restoration Project

June 2004

<b>Project Location</b>	<p>The project site is located along the left bank of the Willapa River, approximately one mile downstream of the City of South Bend in Pacific County, Wash. The property includes 422 acres of diked pasturelands and 35 acres of tidelands owned by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. U.S. Highway 101 bisects the property for approximately 1.5 miles.</p>
<b>Project Background</b>	<p>The property has been diked for the past 90 years, significantly reducing its value as habitat for fish and wildlife. In addition, the highway is subject to flooding. Since long-term maintenance of the dikes is uncertain, the highway could eventually become permanently flooded.</p>
<b>Project Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Restore 300 acres of the Willapa River estuary near South Bend to improve habitat for fish and wildlife and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation.</li><li>• Restore tidal marsh and associated native plant communities. The project will help recreate natural estuarine habitat (i.e. salt marsh, tidal channels, and mudflat), which provides food and shelter for juvenile salmon and other fish and wildlife.</li><li>• Restore estuary rearing and refuge habitat for chinook, chum, and coho salmon, as well as cutthroat trout and other native fish species.</li><li>• Provide habitat for migratory birds that utilize the estuary.</li><li>• Provide public access for educational opportunities and wildlife-oriented recreation that are consistent with habitat restoration objectives.</li></ul>
<b>Project Partners</b>	<p>Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District (USACE); Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Ducks Unlimited.</p>
<b>Key Project Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raise, by approximately three feet, a 1.5-mile section of U.S. 101 that bisects the project area. Install two new culverts with tide gates to allow the flow of water from the freshwater side of the highway to the saltwater side. Construct a highway pull-off with interpretive signs to promote public access.</li><li>• Excavate five primary channels to allow for natural tidal flow and fish passage to the interior of the area. Construct two cross dikes (approximately 1,400 and 500 feet in length) to protect neighboring properties from flooding.</li></ul>

**Project  
Elements  
(cont.)**

- Remove approximately 10,621 linear feet of dike on the Willapa River, allowing for the restoration of 300 acres of tidal estuary.
- Restore 100 acres of wetlands on the upland side of the site to improve freshwater habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife. This part of the project has been expanded from 60 acres in the original proposal.

**Proposed  
Timeline**

Project partners are seeking necessary permits to begin work in the spring of 2005. Work on U.S. 101 would be complete in 2005 and other project elements would be complete in 2006.

**Project  
Cost**

\$5.9 million, including \$2.9 million from WSDOT, \$2.7 million from USACE and \$290,000 from NRCS